

FANTASTIC COMPETITION, EXCITING STORIES AND A GREAT GIFT!*



BATMAN AND SUPERMAN

WIN

BATMAN
INSIDE



BATMAN
AND
RIDDLER
PLAYCASES!



Featuring
LEX LUTHOR

ILLUSTRATED BY
I LOVE TO READ

Every month
No. 49 £1.25



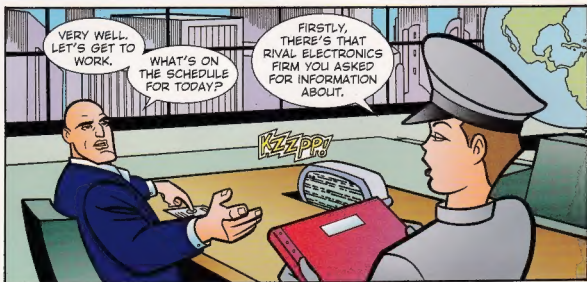
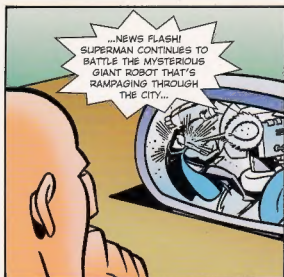
*Gift may not be available on export copies.

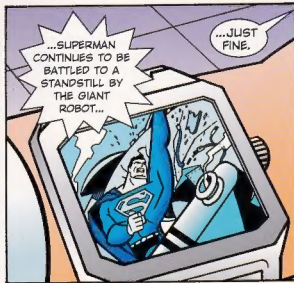
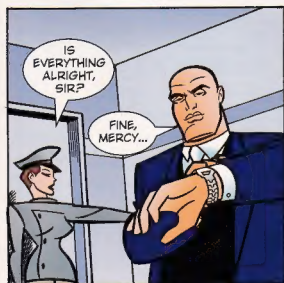
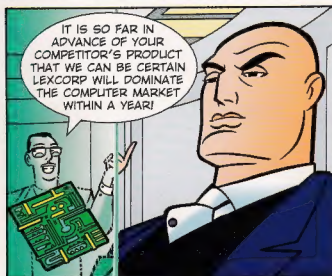
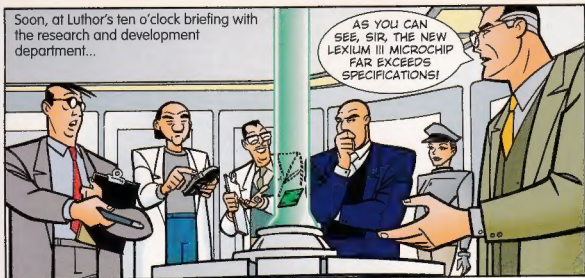
Metropolis at nine o'clock in the morning, sharp. Lex Luthor arrived at work with Mercy Graves, his personal assistant and bodyguard.

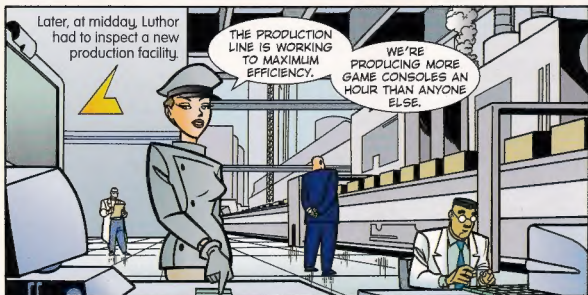


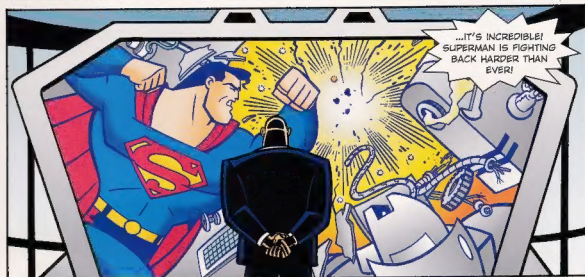
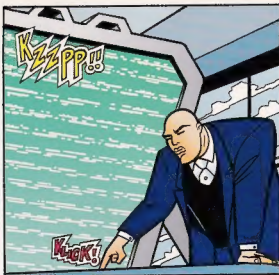
BUSINESS AS USUAL



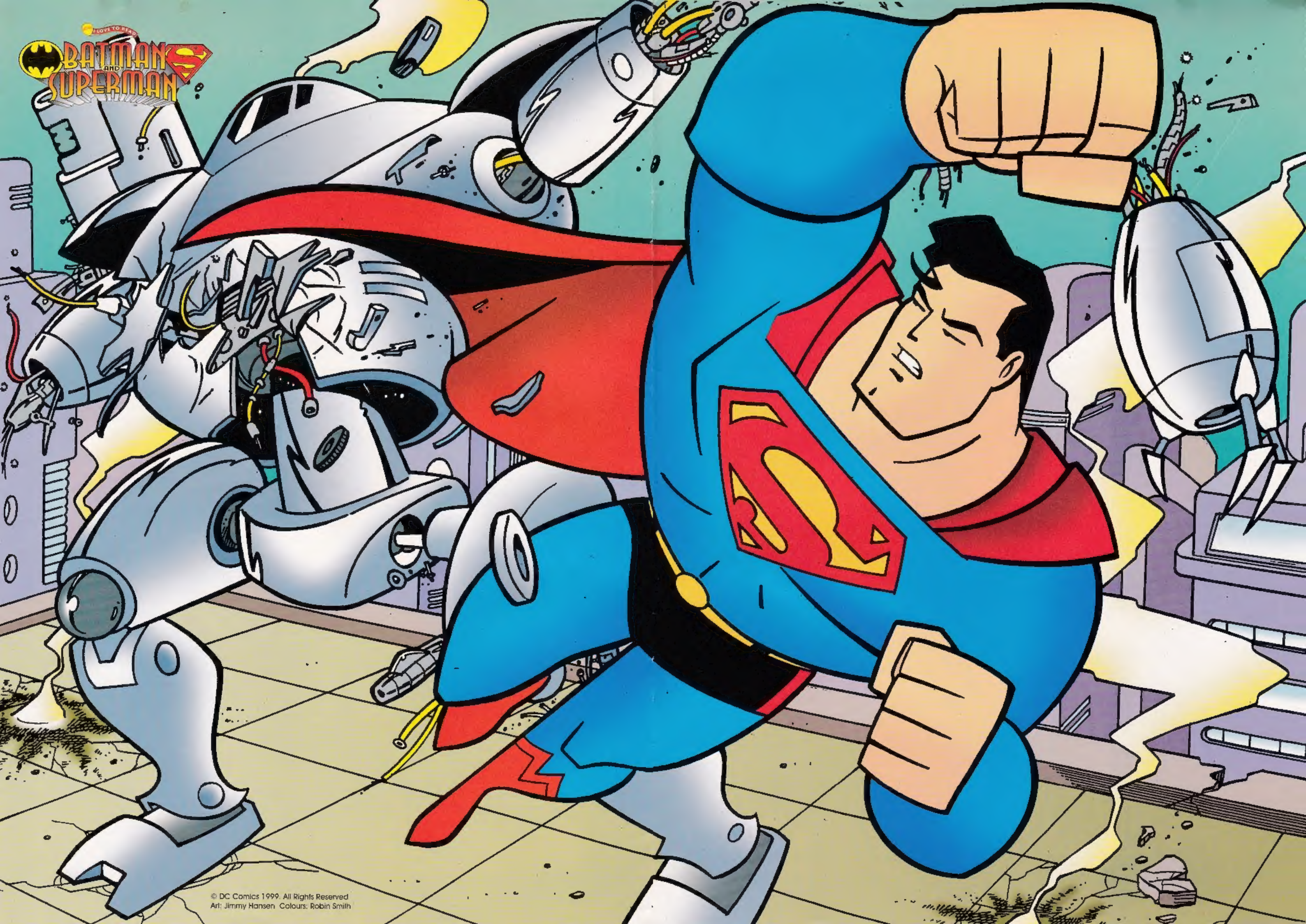












A late night feast begs the question...

DO YOU WANT FRIES WITH THAT?

Cold, hungry and unappreciated. Yes, that pretty much sums up how I feel, thought Harley Quinn.

She pulled the ragged old overcoat closer around her to hide her gaudy costume and slouched off along the downtown Gotham street.

It was night, and it was chilly, and she hadn't eaten a good meal since breakfast. Worse still, her beloved Joker had kicked her out of their secret hideaway because he said she was *interrupting* the plans for his next crime wave. She'd only been trying to help, coming up with some cool new ideas and gimmicks for her Puddin'. He really hadn't seemed to appreciate her ideas

at all. In fact, he hadn't even called her helping "helping". He'd called it *meddling*. He'd thrown her out of the hideaway door and told her to take a *long* walk. Preferably along the *shortest* pier she could find. *Charming!*

Her Sweetums was obviously suffering from stress. Yes, that was undoubtedly the answer! He was suffering from stress and it was blinding him to her loving attentions and concern. There had to be *something* she could do to cheer him up. She thought hard, and as she thought she caught sight of the glowing signs outside a nearby branch of Big Belly Burger. That was it! She'd surprise the Joker with a tasty takeaway!

Harley hurried in through the glass doors of the fast-food restaurant, wondering which of the yummy items on the menu would please him most. It was only when she reached the counter that she realised the one big flaw in her plan. Her harlequin suit was bright and colourful and very fetching... but it didn't have any pockets. And that meant Harley didn't have any money. Oh well, she thought, it'll just have to be a hold up then.



*Cold, hungry and unappreciated. Yes, thought Robin, that pretty much sums up how I feel right now. It'd been a long night, patrolling the downtown district alone while Batman was away dealing with the Riddler's latest plan in the industrial district. Robin had prevented three muggings and a car jack, and no one had even said *thank you*. On top of all that, he hadn't had a good meal since the delicious breakfast Alfred had served up that morning at Wayne Manor.*

Just the *thought* of Alfred's scrambled eggs and bacon made Robin's stomach growl. There was a Big Belly Burger just down the street and he wished he wasn't in costume so he could pop in for a snack. Then he saw a crowd of terrified people fleeing from the restaurant.

It looked as if there was more work to be done...

Cautiously, the Boy Wonder approached the front entrance of the restaurant.

Through the glass, he could see customers and staff cowering on the floor, but there was no sign of a hold up or any other danger. Strangely, one uniformed staff member was still at work at the grills behind the counter. Robin pushed open the door and edged cautiously past the crouching customers until he was at the counter itself. The staff member had her back to him and was cooking up a huge order



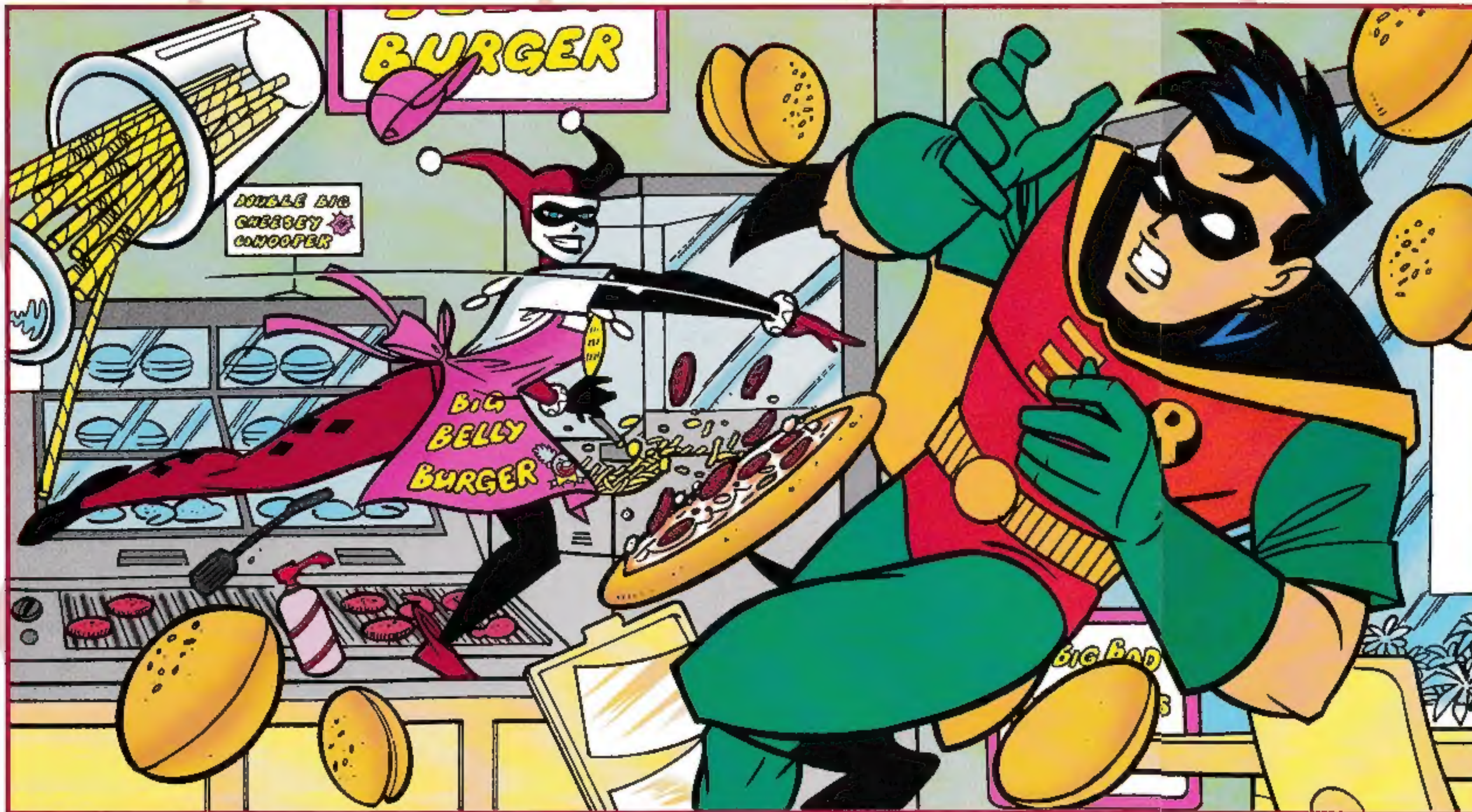
of burgers, fries, onion rings and chicken wings, tossing the sizzling food from grill to grill with her spatula.

Suddenly, she turned to face him. Robin gasped in surprise. It was Harley Quinn, grinning wildly. She was wearing a Big Belly Burger apron and cap on top of her trademark costume. There was a large badge on her lapel that read "I'm Harley! Can I take your order?"

"Well, well, well!" cried Harley, gleefully. "If it isn't the Boy Blunder! How may I help you, sir? A Big Belly kids' meal, perhaps?"

It took a second for the stunned Robin to react, and in that second, Harley flipped her spatula and slapped the Boy Wonder square in the face with a freshly cooked quarter-pounder.

Wiping the food out of his eyes, Robin angrily leapt forwards and vaulted the counter in an attempt to



catch the mischievous villainess. All he managed to get was a burger bun in the mouth. He spat out the doughy fragments and then began to ward off a hail of buns that Harley was throwing at him from a basket by the counter.

She pitched them like baseballs, and though they didn't hurt, it was very annoying, not to say embarrassing.

However, it was even more embarrassing to be on the receiving end of a squirt of burger sauce and the contents of a salad bowl. By now, Harley was laughing hysterically. Robin began to chase her around the kitchen area, but his foot slipped in a pool of the burger sauce she was squirting at him from a fat plastic bottle. He fell

against the milkshake machine and got a thick squirt of strawberry shake down one leg and chocolate shake down the other.

"Do you want fries with that?" cackled Harley, throwing the contents of a basket of freshly cooked french fries towards him. Robin dodged the scalding grease as she darted away with a manic giggle.

After that, there was a rapid-fire stream of doughnuts, several punnets of ice cream and a spinning disc of cheesecake to dodge. As fast as Robin tried to corner her she leapt nimbly away and hurled some other item from the menu at him.

Then it got serious. Harley was

more lethal than a hamburger.

"How about a basket of southern-fried Robin wings!" she snorted.

Robin thought fast. The best way to deal with Harley was to beat her at her own game. He snatched a large pepper pot from the counter nearby, broke it open and threw the contents at Harley. Sneezing and coughing in the cloud of pepper, Harley stumbled away...and slipped headlong in a pool of ketchup that Robin had squirted in her path. Before she could recover, Robin had wrapped her arms tightly to her body with a long length of cellophane food wrap from a dispenser on the wall.

clearly tiring of her game. She snatched up the grill tongs and started snapping them at Robin. He jumped back from the jaws of the utensil, realising that she was trying to drive him backward towards a sizzling deep fat fryer. He knew Harley intended to serve him up something rather

The night was filled with the wail of police sirens. Robin knew the cops would arrive soon to take Harley away. He sat on the front steps of the restaurant, eating a burger and fries from a takeaway bag. Still wrapped in cellophane, Harley sat miserably on the step beside him.

Glancing round, Robin noticed the way she looked sadly and hungrily at every handful of fries he took out of the bag to munch on. Finally, he could stand her pathetic expressions no longer.

"Do you want fries with that?" he asked.

She nodded with a grateful, sad expression.

As the police cars skidded to a halt outside, Robin began to feed her fries, one by one.

